



USAID
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CENTRAL ASIAN REPUBLICS

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USAID Monthly Newsletter

Kazakhstan

Kazakhstan formally accepted into Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring (GEM) Consortium

With support from USAID's Kazakhstan Small Business Development (KSBD) project, in January 2007 the Innovative Eurasia University of Pavlodar was selected to perform a complete GEM statistical analysis of entrepreneurial development in Kazakhstan. This step signifies Kazakhstan's inclusion into the GEM consortium and will further country's capacity and support for business growth and entrepreneurship. GEM is the largest single comparative study of small and medium enterprise in the world, conducted annually in over 40 middle and high income countries. This achievement is particularly noteworthy as Kazakhstan is striving to become one of the top 50 competitive countries in the world.

To facilitate Kazakhstan's acceptance into the consortium, in November 2006, USAID's project issued a tender and selected the Innovative Eurasia University of Pavlodar to perform the GEM survey in the country. With project's support, university representatives received training on the GEM statistical techniques and procedures. Due to the university's strong performance during the training, Kazakhstan was accepted into the GEM consortium and will participate in the GEM survey this year.



USAID's project facilitated Kazakhstan's participation in the international GEM meeting for the 2007 survey in London.
Photo: KSBD

USAID-supported Drug Prevention Training Program will be Implemented in Almaty City Schools

In January 2007, the Almaty City Council approved a training program on HIV prevention, developed by USAID's CAPACITY project, for the city's educational program for all general schools in Almaty. CAPACITY (Central Asian Program on AIDS Control and Intervention Targeting Youth and at Risk Groups), presented its activities and program at the Almaty City Council's meeting on educational institutions' activities for pervention of law violations and drug use. The meeting brought together representatives of government and international organizations, educational institutions, and NGOs working on the issues of adolescents and their rights, education, and drug prevention. Participants expressed interest in CAPACITY's Youth Power Center and the training programs for young people, and will use them in Almaty schools.



USAID's CAPACITY project works in Kazakhstan and the region to prevent drug use among the youth.
Photo: CAPACITY



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Junior Achievement Participants Establish an Alumni Club

In November, thirteen alumni and Junior Achievement Kazakhstan staff officially established an Alumni Club for this USAID-supported program. The club will help former Junior Achievement participants share their experience with the US-funded programs, receive updates on program's activities, and participate in Junior Achievement work. Several alumni have already volunteered to help at the program's National Student Tournament in Economics and the National Teacher Training in spring 2007; one of the alumni will serve on the Junior Achievement Kazakhstan Board of Directors. As a result of the meeting the alumni formed their own teams and participated in the MESE competition in the category "college/university students" and served as the program experts helping Junior Achievement conduct the competition.



Members of the Junior Achievement alumni club at the founding meeting.
Photo: Junior Achievement

Kyrgyzstan

A Drawing Contest Promotes Water User Associations Work

The USAID-funded Water Users Associations Support Program (WUASP) organized a contest of drawings titled "How do I imagine the WUA?" in Kyzylai School, Bazarkorgon Region, Jalalabat Oblast. The contest aimed to increase the public awareness of WUA's role, its importance, and benefits for rural citizens. The exhibition of drawings was attended by students, teachers and parents. The drawings reflected students' perception and understanding of the WUA role in their lives, as well as problems in WUA development. According to the members of the jury, consisting of students, teachers, and parents, it was really difficult to identify the best drawing, as all of them carried meaningful ideas and were well presented. The campaign attracted the community's attention to WUA's problems, advocated for greater involvement in WUA's work, and educated children about the need to protect natural resources. In preparation to the contest, the USAID-funded project provided students with detailed information about the WUA work. Previously, the project involved Kyzylai School students in a contest on how people can avoid pollution of canals.



Children at the contest learned about WUAs.
Photo: WUASP

USAID's Project Empowered Local Primary Health Care Practitioners to Initiate a New Activity

Inspired by the USAID Healthy Family project's trainings, a Family Group Practice in Chon-Gara Village, Batken Rayon launched family planning counseling and training for their community members. The Family Group Practice will educate villagers about family planning, sexually transmitted infections, and reproductive health issues. The initiative started after the USAID-funded Healthy Families project, implemented by Project Hope, delivered a series of trainings on family planning, reproductive health and sexually transmitted infections for medical staff at the Chon-Gara Village Family Group Practice. Inspired by new knowledge and skills, the family practitioners organized a room at their clinic for training and counseling of villagers to raise health



A trained midwife is providing counseling to a Chon-Gara villager.
Photo by Healthy Families Project



awareness and enable them to take greater responsibilities over their health. Health practitioners prepared some visual teaching materials, while the project provided teaching materials in Kyrgyz and Russian languages and samples of contraceptives. The Family Group Practice also organized a mini-library with health-related literature, collected from different donors and projects, including the Healthy Families project. The Family Group Practice now provides both individual and group counseling and training for women of reproductive age.

Tajikistan

Tajikistan Passes Its First Water User Association Law, developed with USAID support

In November, the Parliament and President of the Republic of Tajikistan signed country's first Water User Association Law. Previously, water user associations (WUAs) were registered under the Law on Public Associations and lacked the legal rights to effectively operate and maintain their irrigation and drainage systems. The USAID-funded Water User Association Support Program provided expert legal advice and brought key stakeholders together to provide comments and recommendations on the draft law. The program collaborated with other major donors to draft a WUA, facilitated feedback on the drafts from partner WUAs and, together with a local NGO, sponsored an open parliamentary hearing. The new Water User Association Law represents a significant step forward in enhancing and strengthening water user associations, as well as providing a climate that will promote investments in the agricultural and water sector in Tajikistan.



The USAID-funded program helps communities to set up and manage water users associations.
Photo: WUASP

Turkmenistan

Government of Turkmenistan Approves Safe Motherhood Program

On December 19, the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry approved a national Safe Motherhood program focused on decreasing maternal and child death rates in Turkmenistan. This program will improve basic antenatal and maternity care, as well as increase access to information and services, such as family planning approaches like birth spacing. USAID, in cooperation with WHO, UNICEF, and implementing partners CDC and ZdravPlus, supports this program and other initiatives in this field by facilitating trainings on improved maternal and child health. Most recently, USAID projects delivered trainings on the recently introduced Life Birth Definition for regional level reproductive health specialists and Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI) for the medical staff of regional hospitals, and for family nurses of rural areas. In total, 90 local specialists were trained during two weeks of training sessions from December 18-29.



USAID programs support the Government of Turkmenistan's Safe Motherhood program.
Photo: ZdravPlus

Country Coordination Mechanisms Come To Life

In January, the Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan held two Country Coordination Mechanisms meetings with participation of different ministries and international donors. These meetings



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represent a new level of transparency policy in Turkmenistan, something USAID has advocated for the past three years. In the Country Coordination Mechanisms meeting on vaccination and immunization, the Deputy Minister of Health presented the annual work plan for vaccination and immunization for 2007; the discussion focused on polio revaccination required by WHO standards and the new immunization schedule, including Measles, Mumps, and Rubella. Introduction of the latter immunization for children from birth to 6 years old was authorized by the Ministry earlier in January. Meanwhile during the Country Coordination Mechanisms meeting on malaria, the government announced that Turkmenistan is planning to seek WHO certification as malaria-free country by 2010. USAID has supported previous malaria elimination efforts by training of all specialists of Turkmenistan in malaria, identification, lab diagnostics, treatment, and prevention.

USAID Projects Continue Disseminating the International Financial Reporting Standards

On November 17, over 140 attendees took part in exams for Certified Accounting Practitioner and Certified International Professional Accountant (CAP/CIPA) in Ashgabat. The examinations were organized under USAID's Accounting/CIPA (A/CIPA) project, launched in September 2006 and implemented by the Pragma Corporation. The project continues the activities of USAID's Enterprise Development Project, which promoted the adoption of International Accounting Standards in Turkmenistan and other Central Asian republics. The new A/CIPA project is viewed as a capstone activity that aims to ensure that local institutions support the adoption and implementation of international accounting standards independently of donor resources in the future. Over the past three years, 101 accountants in Turkmenistan have attained CAP-status, 60 of which have been fully certified through the CIPA-EN program.

Junior Achievement Student Fairs provide practical Economics Education

On January 24, seven "school companies" participated in a Student Companies' Fair organized with USAID support by Junior Achievement. Participants presented their marketing strategies and offered them for sale to businesses and organizations that attended the fair. Junior Achievement's Student Company Program provides an opportunity for students to experience the free enterprise system by running their own company from capitalization through liquidation. Participants also discover the contributions of effective management and hard work to success in business. This program is approved by the Ministry of Education as an official elective course and is the only available course on market economics available to Turkmenistan's students. This year's fair involved 300 students and school workers, as well as representatives of business, government and international organizations. Two more fairs are planned for February and March, and more than 1,000 students in the Student Company Program are expected to participate over the remaining school year.



To support improvements in the Turkmenistan's health system, USAID trains medical specialists to prevent and control infectious diseases.
Photo: USAID



More than 100 accountants have attained CAP status thanks to USAID programs.
Photo: EDP



Junior Achievement a variety of opportunities for Turkmenistan's students to learn about economics and free enterprise.
Photo: Junior Achievement